THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNOUSWAMY): (a) and (b) The Government have formulated a Special Scheme for allotment of 500 retail outlets (ROs) dealerships/LPG distributorships to the widows/NOKs of Defence personnel killed in action. Allotments are to be made on the recommendation of the Ministry of Defence. The Directorate General of Resettlement have sent two lists containing a total of 260 proposed beneficiaries for allotment of RO dealerships/LPG distributorship under this Scheme. These include the names of 38 persons belonging to Rajasthan. On the basis of economic feasibility surveys already conducted by Oil Companies the Government have approved the allotment of LPG distributorships/RO dealerships to 116 persons in different States, including 16 persons belonging to Rajasthan.

**Oil and Natural Gas Reserves in Rajasthan**

†371. SHRI ONKAR SINGH LAKHAWAT:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of petroleum and natural gas reserves found so far in Rajasthan; and

(b) the place-wise progress made in exploitation of petroleum/natural gas in Rajasthan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) The estimated ultimate recoverable reserves of gas as on 1.4.99 established in Jaisalmer basin of Rajasthan by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd. (Oil) is 4.572 Billion Cubic Metre. The ultimate reserves of heavy crude oil at Bikaner-Nagaur basin of Rajasthan is estimated by OIL, as on 1.4.99 to be 2.19 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT).

The Private/Joint Venture Companies have recently discovered oil in Barmer district of Rajasthan. The extent of reserves from the discovery, commercial viability etc. are yet to be ascertained.

So far no commercial production of crude oil from Rajasthan by OIL has been made in view its being heavy oil. The sale of gas from Rajasthan was 158.73 Million Metric Standard Cubic Metre (MMSCUM) in 1998-99 and 81.443 MMSCUM in 1999-2000 (up to Oct. 1999).

**Joint Gas Pipeline with Iran**

372. SHRI SITARAM KESRI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to revive the proposal for laying a gas prpeline jointly by India and Iran, the proposal which was shelved earlier;

(b) if so, whether any talks have been held between the two Governments in this regard; and

(c) the outcome of the talks and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) In the meeting of the 10th Session of the Joint Commission between Iran and India held in February, 1999, it was agreed that a joint team of Indian, Iranian and other third party firms would undertake a feasibility study of the Natural Gas Pipeline from Iran to India. Subsequently, discussions were held in June, 1999 and September, 1999 between National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) and Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL). During the discussions, it has been agreed that a tripartite meeting involving NIGC, GAIL and Gazprom of Russia would be useful to have a better understanding on the feasibility of the Project.

**Modernisation of OIL Refineries**

373. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister os PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) modernisation and diversification plan finalised by IOC for various refineries on account of free market economy;

(b) the status of their implementation along with finalised outlays, Commisson target and new plan, if any, refinery-wise;

(c) the details of various HRD programmes and employment policies finalised and implemented to cope up with the present day requirements, refinery-wise; and

(d) the laocation-wise status of exisiting and proposed petroleum training schools in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has drawn up its plan for diversification into Petrochemicals and power utilising the product streams available in its refineries. The details are given below:—

| Sl. No. | Name of the Project | Project Cost (Rs.) | Commissioning Target |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. | Production of MTBE at Gujarat Refinery | 36.0 Crores | Commissioned in Sept., 99 |